

# HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

## POWER TO HACKNEY WOMEN

**WOMEN'S  
RIGHTS**  
Sub-committee ♀

Hackney now has its own committee for women, the Women's Rights Sub-committee and so joins the GLC, Camden, Islington and one or two other forward thinking boroughs.

The setting up of the sub-committee fulfils a commitment made in the last manifesto to give much greater attention to the needs, interests and rights of women in the borough.

The s.c. will be run by and for women only. It has six women councillors and will be serviced by women council officers and, unless there is some very special occasion, only women will be able to come to its meetings. If information is needed for a meeting which is held by male council officers, they will brief women officers who will attend in their place.

With only a couple of open meetings under its belt so far, the S.C. is obviously still in the very early stages of its life and the shape it will take is still uncertain. Such a committee has no clearly defined areas of responsibility laid down such as say the housing committee has, and it is open to the committee and those who come into contact with it to suggest what are the most important areas for action.

Marcelle Chissick, the Chair of the s.c., is still feeling her way forward, but already has a number of plans which she would like to see put in motion. The most important function of the s.c. as she sees it at present is to act as a focus for women's issues in the borough. Whatever subject comes up for discussion by the Council, should have an input from the s.c. to emphasise the special needs of women.

### Areas for action

Employment she regards as a major issue, both generally in the borough and with the Council itself, where opportunities for women do not appear to be much better than they are for ethnic minority people. Associated with employment is the continuing problem of low pay. Violence against women is a further area which needs urgent attention, and a joint meeting with the police committee on violence and prostitution is already planned.

More direct and immediate action has already happened.

The decision was taken at the last Council meeting to eliminate sexist language from the Council minutes. A set of guidelines for Council staff is planned, with the possibility of following up with courses for senior (male) staff to change their attitudes.

So far what can be done is limited because there are no officers in post with sole responsibility for women's affairs. The s.c. has a budget of £24,000, sufficient to fund two officers.

Ms Chissick also considers that the s.c. should give women a central point through which they can get in touch with each other. One of the officers' tasks, when appointed, should be to run a bulletin for local women. An information pack, based on statistics and other material already produced by the Research and Information Department may be another scheme. Working parties may be set up as thought necessary on a particular theme, but Marcelle does not want the s.c. to become too bogged down in rule and procedure. She sees it as having a campaigning function, going out to women in the borough and, for instance, informing them of their benefit rights.

### Early meetings

Many of these ideas have come from the two open meetings which have been held so far. At the first in particular, held on 21 October to discuss women's issues generally, there was an encouraging turnout of some 150 women and the atmosphere was full of energy and excitement.

Marcelle stressed how important the contact from such meetings is - it is only by working with both groups and individual women that the s.c. will be able to fulfil its purpose.

### Audience reaction

The views of the audience however in some cases was less enthusiastic. Whereas they were excited and encouraged that something at least was happening, they were afraid that the s.c. could lose its way.

Several doubts have been raised. First and strongest was that the s.c. would be stifled by bureaucracy: the formality of a council committee structure does not



Pic: N. Martinson/TUSU

accord well with the open debate of meetings in the women's movement.

Another regret was that the meeting was so unrepresentative: there were no middle-aged or elderly women present and the ethnic minority groups of Hackney were very poorly represented.

Women also expressed their disquiet at the Council's apparent desire to prioritise. How can you say that child care or equal opportunities are more important? Your choice of course depends on what your own needs are, and to be asked to make this choice was thought to be divisive. As one woman put it "I felt we were being offered a cake - and not a very large one - which was to be hacked up between us"

Ms Chissick is aware of some at least of the criticisms. She intends to hold regular meetings because she wants the input, but hopes to counter some of the complaints by moving round to different community centres, and providing transport.

For some of the other doubts, women will have to wait and see. Undoubtedly in some respects the Council and women, especially feminists, are poles apart. Marcelle Chissick has considerable commitment to the project however and is determined to make it work. It is to be hoped that both sides will put

in the effort to make it do so.

Other criticisms have of course been forthcoming. The reaction from the solidly male ranks of the Tory councillors was predictable (reported in an equally predictable fatuous piece in the Hackney Gazette). 'How absurd', cried Councillor Chris Sills, 'sexism gone mad', 'a waste of rate-payers' time and money'. He shudders at how much it must cost (and one wonders how much his interruptions at Council meetings must cost too). Is it after all so unreasonable that there should be some attempt to redress the balance of power in favour of the 55% of Hackney's population which is female? One only has to look at the the council to see how under-represented women are.

### The way forward

Although doubtless it will take some time before the s.c. becomes effective, it does seem reasonably well-placed to make its voice heard. The s.c. reports direct to the Policy and Resources Committee and so Marcelle can push women's interests on every aspect of council business that comes up. How much will come of this remains to be seen and will show how committed the Council is to its new committee.

## LESNEYS STRIPPED

It is now clear that the giant multinational Universal International which bought Hackney's collapsed Lesney Products from the receiver has managed to run rings around Hackney Council and the GLC. Some 1900 jobs are going to be lost altogether - 1300 in Hackney - when Universal finish what is turning out to be a straightforward asset stripping operation. The effect on Hackney of the closure of its largest private employer is nothing short of disastrous.

Of the four companies that were known to be interested in buying up Lesneys, Universal offered the worst prospects for employment. Yet the receivers, Price Waterhouse, a big City accountancy firm, set up the deal with them. To make matters easier for Universal Price Waterhouse themselves issued 1100 redundancy notices before the deal was completed. So now 600 workers at the Rochford plant in Essex and 500 in Hackney are unclear whether their redundancy money - if they are due any - will be coming from the old owners or the new. What is certain is that this was done by the receivers so that there was less financial burden on Universal when they came in.

New Universal are thought to be transferring valuable machinery and tools from Hackney to their factory in Macao in the Far East. There are rumours that their Hong Kong factory is also running at less than full capacity.

(Continued on back page)

## Help!

Why not help us to produce the next issue of this paper? Even if you can't make our next editorial meeting (1 December, 8.00 at Centerprise) here's how you can become involved:

- send a letter for our letters column;
- write an article about your group, or anything happening in Hackney of interest to others;
- come along to our production weekend and get stuck in! No previous experience required, we will soon show you the tricks of the trade.

Correspondence should be addressed to Hackney People's Press, 47A Grayling Rd. N16. For more information or just a friendly chat give us a ring on any of these (home) numbers:  
Charles 806 9211  
Ian 985 7513  
Sue 254 7191.



# ANTI-FED FARCE

The attempt by a number of disaffected ex-councillors and their cronies still on the Council to set up an alternative to the Federation of Hackney Tenants Associations is turning into a great embarrassment - for the Old Guard involved. Despite the stir they caused by disrupting a Council meeting (where some of their supporters made racist remarks about a deputation from the Hackney Black People's Association) and a massive amount of publicity in the Hackney Gazette, the few tenants who turned up to their first meeting found out that a committee had already been appointed. And guess who is on the committee? The same dis-

affected former councillors who have been so disgruntled for so long. A deputation that they organised to the Housing Services committee should have had seven people on it. But they could only muster four - three of them ex-councillors Florence Newill, Betty Blomfield and Don Ward. According to the constitution that they have devised for themselves, you don't even have to live in Hackney to be a member.

The reason why these ex-councillors have got such a grudge against the Federation is because of the change in procedure that means that the Federation now elects its own representative onto the Housing Services Committee. Before the

change in procedure the tenants' representatives were elected by a strange system at a meeting where all sorts of odd TAs which didn't properly exist, except in the eyes of the Council's Community Development officer in the Housing Department, George Brooker, turned up.

## Old Guard

And time and time again the same kind of people were elected: Florence Newill herself one year, before she got back onto the Council at a by-election. Barry Hibberd husband of one councillor and son-in-law of two more was also a representative. Just the sort of people who inspired confidence in their independence.

Now the representatives are elected by a general meeting of the Federation of Hackney Tenants Associations - a federation which is open to all TAs. But the "Old Guard" TAs have always refused to join the Federation - because they are frightened that their views would get swamped. They also complain that the Federation is 'political', but don't explain why they are so against politics. What they mean, of course, is that its politics are to act in the best interests of tenants, and to represent them to the Council.

It is now official Federation policy to support the disbandment of George Brooker's unit inside the Council. This is not because they want to see seven jobs lost inside the Housing Department, but because the work done by the unit is

counter-productive to the interests of tenants actually getting together and helping themselves. The kinds of TAs that are built up by the unit are the kind of TAs that the old-style Council like to see. They were primarily social organisations which did not have the real campaigning interests of the tenants at heart. There have been plenty of allegations, for instance, that the TAs have operated racist practices.

The Federation has been struggling for years to get proper recognition for its work, and to build a strong, united organisation that would genuinely campaign on behalf of tenants. It doesn't believe in the paternal style of politics so beloved by the Old Guard. If they really wanted to act in tenants' best interests they should join the Fed, and work through it.

## Black groups & Labour

Dear Friends,

Re your article 'ILEA charged with racism' in HPP No.83, can we point out that Pansy Adele is not a member of Hackney Black Peoples Association. Your article has created some confusion among people who may not know who are members of our Association. For the record, the particular meeting was chaired by one of our members.

It seems that your reporter misconstrued the purpose of the meeting held on Anselm Samuel's case. This is a Black Youth Worker who was being victimised by officers of ILEA. It was necessary for us to conduct a struggle inside the Labour Party since the nature of racism and the systems which operate in ILEA and other local government institutions is not understood, either by the Labour Party or any other political party.

The white GLC and ILEA bigwigs who spoke at the meeting were speaking in support of our campaign. We realise

that Labour in power in local government may want to redress the racism and racial disadvantage suffered by Black People. It is far better for those like GLC Councillor Gerry Ross to come and speak and listen to what Blacks have to say than to take decisions without consulting Blacks.

Finally, we have attached a letter which was sent to Professor David Smith - the Leader of the Tory group on ILEA. We suggest that if you want your readers to know what Blacks have to say on the matter, then you should publish the letter in full. Only Caribbean Times published it.

We would like to wish HPP every success and hope we can depend on you to publicise our views and not to suppress them in the manner of the Daily Mail, the Hackney Gazette and the Standard.

Yours faithfully,  
Lester Lewis, chairperson,  
Hackney Black Peoples Association (See Below)

## LETTERS HCND Reply

Dear HPP,

We have read the "Disgruntled HCND" letter, which was printed in HPP issue No.83, September 1982 - and would like to offer a few words in reply.

The Hackney Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is part of a national campaign to abolish nuclear weapons. Within Hackney we face certain difficulties as the borough contains no nuclear bases, and with a sympathetic council we often lack a local focus

for our activities. In the main we feel that much of our campaign work should be geared to a general public awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons, and information on the total destruction that London would suffer in a nuclear war.

It was with this in mind that we remembered the Nagasaki day bombing with a Lantern Launch on the River Lea. Every year in Japan the souls of the dead are commemorated by the silent, dignified procession of lanterns floating on the major rivers. We could think of no better way than to emulate this ceremony.

We do not have such picturesque rivers as in Japan, nor are we able to make such beautiful (biodegradable) lanterns, yet we felt the ceremony worthwhile. Of course there was much that was wrong with it, but it is not the job of the secretariat to defend these activities. Hackney CND is made up of a large body of people, some of whom have both the time and energy to campaign in an

active manner. Decisions are made in meetings, open to all members. If our publicity is not as good as it sometimes could be, then it is because we lack the time, money, and people that the opposition is able to employ. Yet this does not make our cause any less valid. The need to disarm is as vital now as it has ever been. In fact, with the escalating arms race, it has become even more urgent. 163 Cruise missiles will be stationed in this country next year - they must be stopped.

We recognise that our campaign work is not always as good as it need be. But surely personal criticism becomes invalid when faced by the greatest threat to humanity the world has ever seen. What we ask is not what you think of us (or the organisation), but whether you are for - or against - our basic argument, that of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Yours, the Secretariat,  
Hackney CND.

## Open Letter from HBPA to ILEA Tory Group

Dear Councillor Smith,

Members of the Black Community in Hackney are indignant that you and your Conservative party colleagues have been instrumental in organising a scurrilous anti-Black people campaign in the pages of the Daily Mail, the Standard, the Sun, the Times and the Hackney Gazette.

In supporting senior ILEA officers in their attempt to victimise Anselm Samuel on racial grounds, to support them in their attempt to discriminate against black staff at Clapton Youth Centre and the whole Black Community in Hackney; your colleagues and yourself mimic the declared policy of racial discrimination and racial intolerance practiced by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government.

For a political leader in the education field, your actions have been highly irresponsible. The acts of your Deputy, Dr. David Amery, other Tories on ILEA and yourself as leader of the Conservative group have been

designed to whip up racial hysteria, feelings of ill will against black people, and to reinforce racist stereotypes propagated by such bogus academics as Sir Cyril Burt, Eysenck and Jensen.

That is the only conclusion we can derive from (a) your leaking of "confidential minutes" of ILEA meetings to the Daily Mail, (b) falsely accusing black people of putting unfair pressure on Labour members of ILEA, (c) falsely accusing black people of threatening violence if Anselm Samuel was not given equal treatment as other white workers in Further and Higher Education establishments and Youth Centres, and (d) falsely accusing members of the Black Community in Hackney of blackmailing ILEA.

The Conservative group, in another personal attack on Anselm Samuel, issued a statement to the Daily Mail. This stated that 'Mr Samuel was a militant who seeks confrontation rather than compromise, and this made him unsuitable for the post

of Tutor-in-Charge', a function of ILEA which he has successfully carried out for many years.

For the record, no member of the Black Community in Hackney has (i) made any threats of violence, (ii) applied unfair pressure on any politician or (iii), blackmailed any politician in relation to the victimisation of Anselm Samuel or any other matter.

Mr. Samuel, the black staff at Clapton Youth Centre, the black youths and members of Clapton Youth Centre and their parents, have legitimate grievances.

Remember that ILEA officers attempted to downgrade the Youth Centre to a Youth Club after it had been agreed to upgrade it to a Community Education Centre. Black staff would have had to take substantial reductions in their earnings, and the Centre would have opened for fewer hours. This is an area where we have serious problems. Given these circumstances, we are entitled to make

representations to political leaders of ILEA.

Not only that, officers have starved the Centre of the resources it needs to develop. It is the parents and the black youths who have had to raise money for the centre.

Senior ILEA officers, your Conservative Group, some Labour members of ILEA and the press have attempted to portray Mr. Samuel as a violent criminal. While it is true that Mr. Samuel was convicted twice in 1970, both those convictions resulted from attacks from racist gangs, one being a meeting broken up by cowardly fascist national front thugs. We are bound to note, the only time national front thugs get arrested for breaking up political meetings is when the meeting is organised by the Conservative Party.

The Conservative Party has engaged on a race relations exercise in which William Whitelaw has promised that racial equality and equal opportunity is part of the Conservative Party policy,

and if this policy means anything the ILEA Conservative group must act so that justice is seen to be done.

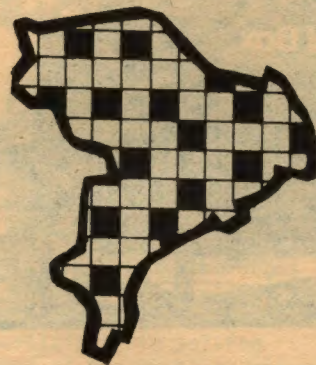
What is instructive to us in this whole affair, is that at no time have you or any other member of your Tory group ever attempted to speak to concerned members of the Black Community in Hackney. Instead you have released to the Daily Mail all the racist lies and innuendoes fed to you by officers.

We demand you and your Conservative Party colleagues end the anti-Black people campaign you have orchestrated in the press. We urge you to respect the wishes of the users of Clapton Youth Centre, their parents and members of staff of Clapton Youth Centre that Anselm Samuel should not be dismissed from his job as a part time worker, and that the offer of a full time job as lecturer be reaffirmed.

Yours faithfully,  
Lester Lewis.



# Going Local: Round 1



## WARD MEETINGS

The consultation process on "Hackney goes Local", the scheme to decentralise services from the Town Hall into the local communities is progressing according to the timetable. The first round of ward meetings has been completed, and below we print reports from two of these. Some wards are having recall meetings due either to popular demand or mishaps. On the whole, people have found that the way they were run - more emphasis on small group discussions rather than the old method of rows of chairs - very helpful. However many have felt very disillusioned by the lack of answers available to many questions.

The next stage of the process is a conference over the weekend of 20th/21st November at the Town Hall. Much is still open there, but it is hoped that the main issues and problems will be considered, and the way in which decentralisation proposals will be put together will be decided. These will then be drawn up before further consultation in the New Year. HPP will be keeping you in touch with further developments.

## EASTDOWN

Over fifty local residents turned up at Gooch House Hall in Clapton last month to find out just what 'Hackney Goes Local' is all about. The meeting was one of several which took place throughout the Borough as part of the Council's attempt to explain their plans to decentralise services.

The turnout at Gooch House was greater than at other meetings, but East down - the local ward which covers estates such as Pembury and Nightingale - contains the largest proportion of ex-GLC housing stock and has some of the worst housing problems in the borough.

## Efficiency

The meeting was introduced by councillor Charles Clarke, chair of the Housing Department. He explained how the building of local housing offices on estates would mean that repairs and other problems would be dealt with more quickly and efficiently than at present. Each office would have a small team of workers who would be responsible for the maintenance of each estate. If tenants have a housing problem, they would go to their local office rather than the Town Hall to get something done.

Many of the tenants at the Gooch House meeting had problems already on their estate. The main areas of concern were

about the state of the estates, the problem of vandalism and the installation of entryphones in old people's flats. People wanted to know if decentralisation would really mean that these problems could be solved more quickly.

The other issue that was raised at the meeting was just how much this programme would cost. Some people suggested that it might be better to spend money directly on repairs rather than on building local offices.

However, councillor Clarke replied that the most important benefit of decentralisation would be the involvement of local residents in deciding just what improvements should be carried out on their estate. This would ensure that money would not be wasted on projects the tenants did not really want.

It was also pointed out that the new plans should guarantee that discrimination against black and women workers in the council should be ended. (For reasons best known to himself, council officer Tony Shoults disassociated himself from this statement.)

Many of the residents left the meeting more than a little sceptical about how successful 'Hackney Goes Local' will be. However, it was unanimously agreed that another meeting should be organised in November at which resident groups should be formed to put forward ideas to the Council.

## WESTDOWN

After having my curiosity aroused by numerous council leaflets about decentralisation, and having nothing better to do on a Monday evening, I decided to pay a visit to Centreprise on the 18th of October to find out more. 35 other people turned up.

Councillor Mary Cannon from the Council's Decentralisation Group started the proceedings. She emphasised that "Going Local" was more than just a slick media campaign; the purpose was to shift real power from the Town Hall to local communities. "What we're here to do tonight," she said, "is to listen to you about how you feel it should go." In the two hours that followed we were treated to an array of state of the art communication techniques designed to make the meeting feel informal and to promote 'feedback'.

The meeting divided into two groups, each attended by a council Decentralisation officer. Tim was our facilitator. He stepped up to an easel 'flip-chart' and encouraged us to air our opinions. With a felt-tip pen in his hand he stood by to record our wisdom. There was a long pause until somebody muttered about housing repairs. Tim wrote "Better Hsg Repairs" on the flip-chart.

## Frustration

53 points later we were becoming a bit frustrated. Most of the people at the meeting had unformed opinions about Going Local and all we could do was to ask questions to try to find out more, speculate about whether it would work or not and voice our growing suspicions. Tim wrote everything down, but was reluctant to offer his opinions or knowledge about the project. There was a one-way flow of information that led only as far as the flip-chart.

It felt as though we were being squeezed for raw material. Everything we said was to be taken down and sent back to Town Hall to be turned into a consultation report.

The flip-chart pages were posted up to form a Chinese Wall in the Centreprise coffee bar. We were then given sticky red dots and told to put them beside the points that most concerned us.

Real discussion was held back until the two groups reunited and reported back to each other.

## Half-hearted

I came out feeling that the meeting had gone off like a damp squib. Most of the participants - councillors, council officers and members of the public included - seemed strangely half-hearted. It was very easy to lapse into an apathetic attitude that if Going Local was just going to mean a new set of committees for political careerists to get elected to and a few cosmetic changes in council services, it didn't seem to be worth the bother. It would be worse to go through the motions of decentralisation without giving a real say to local people than it would be to preserve the status quo.

However it did appear at the meeting that the council was sincere in its pledge to increase participation. It would also be very short-sighted to ignore the real opportunities for local democracy that Going Local offers. Very much depends on the reaction to this first round of meetings and the extent to which local communities and groups mobilise to present a coherent response.

A clearer picture should emerge at the Going Local conference to be held at the Town Hall on November 20th and 21st.

By then people had become increasingly negative and sceptical. One person pointed out that only the views of politically active people were represented. Someone else noted the absence of people such as "the lads down Sandringham Road." Tim wrote up "(10) capturing the views of ethnic minorities." Only three black people attended the meeting.

Another person observed, "it's all very chummy, but is that going to make any difference?" He couldn't see how Going Local would improve council services while they were under attack from the Tory government. There were one or two suggestions - for example someone thought the east end of Sandringham Road would be a good site for the Westdown office and it was generally agreed that a neighbourhood committee connected to the local office would be a starting point.

## Hackney Tells All

One of the most important steps made by the Council as part of this year's programme has been the move towards greater freedom of information. The Council has decided to allow members of the public to see certain files which up to now have been secret or restricted - the first council, it is believed, to do so.

The details are still to be worked out, but it could mean that individuals have the right to see confidential reports prepared on them by social worker, or a council assessment of their housing problem. There will be a code of practice on what information should be released: some exceptions will have to be made to the open files policy, where it could affect personal privacy.

Leader Anthony Kendall's intention is to make the Council more open, more honest and more efficient. Decisions taken should in future be open to scrutiny by those whose lives they will affect. If people find they are being misinformed or if the records on them are wrong, they will have the chance to set the record straight.

Housing information is already available, other will follow, such as leisure and social services. Files on individuals will, of course, be confidential to that person.

## OPEN FILES

The Tory opposition sees all kinds of dangers in the plan. They fear that it will lead to a multiplication of files, with a corresponding increase in cost, and that council officers will not do their jobs properly, since they will suppress any information that could cause unpleasantness. Anthony Kendall's reply to that is that no council employee should be making statements which cannot be proven, and that the kind of note which could cause argument is the kind which most needs to be discussed.

Another danger is that a housing file or social worker's notes could have information which if revealed could be a breach of professional etiquette. One of the areas of greatest difficulty is social services. The whole area is at present being examined to see what exactly the problems are and find out how to overcome them. Social services staff generally appear to be supportive to the move. It is to be hoped that the Council will avoid the confrontation Birmingham has had with its social workers who have threatened to reveal all on their councillors' sex lives if they are made to disclose the contents of their files. Though, as one councillor said rather sadly, what time do Hackney councillors have for such things?





# ALTERNATIVES

While the multi-national asset-strippers move in on Lesneys factory (see front page article) groups of local people are trying to develop an alternative economic strategy for Hackney, and to practice different ways of working, through co-operatives and job-sharing. In this special feature, HPP looks at these initiatives as well as the influence of micro-technology, and an attempt to link up trades unions and community groups across East London.

## Looking at the local economy

The state of the local economy is obvious to all: not only the unemployed, but also those in work struggling to make ends meet on inadequate wages. Hackney Trades Council Trade Union Support Unit has recently produced a paper on Economic Policy in Hackney intended to provide the basis for local discussion.

The paper starts by documenting in some detail the local economy eg. employment in different sectors and how things have changed - mainly for the worse. As employment has contracted the older nineteenth century sectors of the economy are more dominant such as clothing, printing, furniture etc. Jobs have gone in large firms, Lesneys being the

latest disaster, and the remaining jobs tend to be in small firms; insecure, casual, poor pay and conditions.

Statistics prove what we know from experience: in April 1982 the average earnings for male workers in Hackney were £145 and £178 in greater London, for women the figures were £102 and £116. Even this is misleading as part time workers earnings are excluded, the majority of course are low paid women.

Hackney is more than ever becoming a back street economy operating on the margins with employment in home working, off the record, with an inadequate income from a variety of sources.

What then can be done in

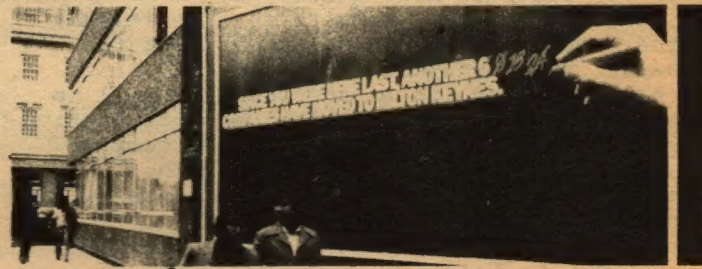
Hackney to ease the problem? What is the council doing here? Local policy is restricted by the world financial system and Government policy. But as the council policy is committed to a private sector solution, with the role of the public sector as providing the preconditions for private sector success, the council's policy has largely failed.

The problem is not so much the way it is applied "as that the assumptions on which it is based are wrong ... The key problem is how to transform the present industrial base. Present policies encourage the persistence of existing patterns of employment, the key features of which are that as the economy contracts the worst features become more prominent."

A local Alternative Strategy is needed. The Trades Council's view is that the public sector must itself play the leading role in investment. The problem

is that this would require a radical change in the nature of the economy on a national level. The Trades Council are arguing for four guiding principles in determining local economic policy: (1) EMPLOYMENT - the aim should be to prevent further job losses. The

eg. manual workers, women and ethnic minorities. (4) DEMOCRATIC WORK ORGANISATION - important within the council's own management, especially in the decentralisation of services currently underway. For more information, or to feed back any ideas you have contact the Trades



creation of new jobs is vital: other areas, for example the East Midlands, have lost jobs like Hackney, but many new jobs have been created lessening the impact. (2) ACTION ON LOW PAY - the jobs need to pay enough for a decent standard of living. (3) POSITIVE ACTION - to help those worst affected

Council Trade Union Support Unit at 34 Dalston Lane, E8 3AZ. Tel 249 8086. Meanwhile a group of people within Hackney are discussing these and other issues related to the local alternative strategy. Their next meeting is on Wednesday Nov 17, at Hackney Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E8 at 8pm.

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## MICROCHIP MISSIONARIES

The Borough Council has helped to convert a car showroom in Shoreditch into a missionary outpost to bring the message of high technology to the disbelievers of Hackney.

The City Technology Centre (a.k.a. CityTec), located at 165 Shoreditch High St., aims to encourage Hackney businessmen (sic) to incorporate the latest micro-electronic devices into their industries.

Chris Megan, Assistant Director of the project, explained that by promoting awareness in the borough of recent technological developments, CityTec would act as a "catalyst" to make Hackney more appealing as a potential site for high technology companies.

Megan pointed out that computers could transform design and manufacturing processes, especially in the rag trade, improve stock control, and as he put

it, "take Hackney's accounts off the back of envelopes."

Megan believes that micro-computers don't destroy jobs, rather they create new kinds of work and make industries more competitive. "It's all progress," he said. CityTec plans to help promote new businesses in the borough by

is busy slashing health, education and social services in the borough, CityTec is one of the few ventures to attract Treasury funds to Hackney. The centre was opened with the assistance of £45,000 in grants from the Industry and Environment departments and another £15,000 from Hackney council.

**The City Technology Centre**

providing them with low-cost facilities and advice.

All this sounds noble and well intentioned, but there is a hollow ring to it. CityTec is the product of a Town Hall pipe-dream that sees new technology as a Phoenix that will rescue Hackney from the ashes of the borough's declining industries.

This inspirational litany may sound familiar, since it's one of Thatcher's favorites. The Ministry of IT (information technology) has been created to pump out more hi-tech propaganda and to help create other CityTecs across the nation. While the government

As its name suggests, CityTec aims to attract the interest of City business and the centre's services are oriented towards commercial users. At £15 a throw, CityTec's three-day Micro Technology Awareness Course is not just another adult education class.

Technology is not necessarily a bad thing, but within our society the ends it serves will not be freedom, justice nor democracy. The technological awareness that CityTec aims to promote among City and Hackney capitalists is based on the opportunities micro-computers create to increase 'control' and profits. As for the people of Hackney? The message seems to be, 'let them eat microchips'.



# AT WORK



## At the Co-op

Hackney Co-operative Development is running a publicity campaign trying to encourage local people to think about setting up co-operatives - businesses that are controlled solely by their workers. It acts as an information and publicity centre, running a regular course on co-ops and generally promoting the idea of workers' control. It gives intensive support to any group that wants to form a co-op, helps to investigate the economic feasibility of their plans, to obtain the necessary finance and to develop a democratic and efficient business. They do not want to control or limit the work of the people who come to them, only to offer support. They also work closely with existing co-ops and the local union movement, the Council, the GLC and the national co-op movement.

Co-ops have been seen as a possible cure for unemployment. Mosquito Bikes, for instance, were last year four jobless people. They set up a cycle repair business and now are considering the expansion of the workforce and a move to new premises. However, not many jobs can be created by taking business from existing firms, and a narrow job creation approach can be damaging to co-op democracy when taken to an extreme. For instance, the Wandsworth Co-operative Agency is a profit-maximising industrial job-making scheme rather than a group committed to ensuring that co-op members control the direction of their own operation.

### Moderate

The Liberals and the SDP have put forward a case for a major role for co-ops within the economy. David Owen among others has argued that workers will moderate their

pay claims in order to keep their business going.

HCD is staffed by trades unionists who are all keen to get co-ops to pay good wages. The agency is managed by a steering group who include representatives from a wide range of organisations. These include the Council, the co-op movement, the Trades Council and local co-ops such as Trojan Printing Services. The liberal wing of the co-op movement has often placed little emphasis on building a self-reliant movement able to work out its own priorities and assert them against those of the capitalists. HCD is determined not to fall into this trap, and is evolving a role in local community politics. The Trades Council has asked them to help plan an alternative economic strategy for Hackney and the constitution that HCD is now drawing up will ensure that it maintains its role in the locality.

### Variety

HCD only became fully operational in April 1980 and now has 16 co-ops on their books. These operate in a variety of industrial and service trades. These include building and architecture, furniture making and renovation, feminist publishing secretarial services, electrical equipment repairs and bike-mending.

HCD are hoping to expand their work. They would like to encourage a mini-industrial estate in the Bradbury Street area of Dalston, with co-operative shops, workshops and a creche. They want to take their bottom-up philosophy of workers control further to allow people to find out more about co-ops, and to put real choice into the hands of the workforce.

## SHARE A JOB - BY CHOICE

The concept of part time working has existed for years. It may be a way of bringing in a bit extra money for some who do not want to work full time, but for most it is an unsatisfactory situation: people who either can't get or don't want a full time job are forced to take badly paid part time jobs with no job security and poor conditions.

The concept of Job Sharing by contrast is more recent: how does it differ from part time work? Will it reduce unemployment? Or is it just another way of getting people (women in particular) into part time low wage work? Sue Oppenheimer of Hackney Job Share Project explained that two people shared one job, both having the same rights and conditions (pro rata) as a full time worker. It could mean for instance that a man and woman could share a job - and the child rearing. It could open up career options for women and mean reduced work hours for men. It could give people a greater chance to study or follow leisure pursuits, lower unemployment figures and improve the position of part timers.

Given high unemployment figures and the advance of new technology there is more than ever a need to reexamine our concept of full employment and the working week. However caution is needed, particularly with the Government



moving in with its Job Splitting scheme giving £700 to employers to take on an unemployed person. This scheme can thus be seen as a threat to full time jobs and with the scheme being able to operate for less than a 16 hour week employment rights would be lost.

Job sharing could benefit local people and go some way to easing Hackney's unemployment, but it must be on our terms - not terms dictated by others designed to get even more people into insecure low paid jobs.

Hackney Job Share Project have an easily transportable exhibition and video available in which they explored with people what Job Sharing means to them. For more details contact Hackney Job Share Project, Shoreditch Town Hall, 380 Old Street, EC1. 739 0741.

## EAST LONDON ASSEMBLY

An organisation covering five East London boroughs has been formed recently to encourage local people to participate in solving some of the problems which beset the area. These are in particular housing, transport and public services, whether the immediate threats to services from Government cuts - in education, health and social services - as well as the longer term ones such as racial harassment.

As a first move the East London Assembly - formed by community groups, trades union branches and Labour and Liberal councillors from Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Waltham Forest and Barking - has pledged full support to health workers in their current pay demands.

The East London Assembly was set up after the London Assembly which was held earlier this year to hammer out new policies to combat the effects of the Government's policies on public spending in the capital. Its working brief is to organise public discussion

of the difficulties facing the five boroughs and to debate and promote new and alternative policies on employment, transport, health and social services.

Brian Nicholson, official of the East London Transport & General Workers has been elected to chair the assembly by delegates from over forty organisations. Shop worker Vivian Levi was elected as secretary.

Mr Nicholson said that it was imperative that the Assembly co-ordinate as many groups as possible to give it real political muscle and provide a cutting edge to its programme of defence of local jobs and services.

Jack Smith, of the Co-op London Region Political Committee, stressed the importance of the Assembly for those without jobs. "Many of the problems which face these boroughs hit the unemployed hardest. They can't find jobs and they can't find places to live. They must have a voice and play a leading part in our struggle against the vicious cuts in public spending imposed by this Tory Government."

ADVERTISEMENT

## SPLASH

### for better swimming in Hackney

#### Super splash sought by swimmers

SPLASH are a group of people who think that swimming pools, and swimmers, in Hackney, should be given a better deal.

They say they will campaign for Hackney's pools to be improved and for opening hours to be extended, reports Julia Hunt.

They will be calling on Hackney Council to make swimming pools a priority and to restore the old pools at Clissold Road Baths and Lower Clapton Road.

They believe the public should think of swimming pools as places of enjoyment and not as "paradises for cockroaches."

They also want pools open in the evenings and at weekends.

**PUT OFF**

Splash say that many people are put off of swimming in Hackney for these reasons and they want to do something about it.

Splash's first meeting is at Clissold Park Road Baths. They invite supporters to go.

**HACKNEY GAZETTE**

for a swim first, at 6.30 pm, and then attend a meeting at 7.30 pm to discuss ideas for improving the pools. Anybody with an interest in swimming is welcome.

One of Splash's members, Helen Peit said: "As a keen swimmer myself, I find it difficult to swim in Hackney as the baths are shut after five and don't open on Sundays."

"Conditions of the pools are pretty squalid and we aim to try and improve these things for the community."

#### LONGER OPENING HOURS

SPLASH will continue to campaign for longer opening hours - including weekends - and more fun sessions for kids, along with adult swimming sessions.

**FORMER GLORY**

They also want a guarantee that there will be no cuts in local pools when the new Britannia leisure pool is completed, and they want Whiston Road, Clissold and Hackney Central baths restored to "their former glory," with updated facilities for the elderly and disabled.

#### NOT MUCH FUN.....

There is no pool in Hackney suitable for children under 5. This is one of the issues SPLASH will be taking up. And where can parents leave their children while they have a swim themselves? Should we be happy with just one fun pool in Shoreditch when it's built. Why shouldn't all the pools be fun to go to? Tell us what you think at the SPLASH open meeting.

For more details about SPLASH's activities and meetings phone Helen on 729.5536. We also have a fortnightly swim at Lower Clapton pool for SPLASH members. Contact us now!

- FACILITIES FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED
- WARMER POOLS
- GOOD SHOWERS
- SWIMMING LESSONS
- IMPROVED CONDITIONS FOR STAFF
- POOLS OPEN IN THE EVENINGS AND SUNDAYS
- MONEY TO MAKE LOCAL POOLS BETTER
- FUN FOR KIDS
- TIMES FOR ADULTS ONLY
- A CRECHE
- PUBLICITY FOR POOLS



REVIEW:

## As Good As We Make It

"As Good As We Make It", a book of writing by Centerprise young writers is now available at the Centerprise Bookshop, 136 Kingsland High St., E8 for £1.40. Last month we published two poems as a sampler, "Keys Rattling" by Angela Mars and "Eve's Poem" by Eveline Marius. But what of the book as a whole? No doubt about it, it's good. That's to say that I liked it; your taste in writing may well differ, but there's a sufficiently varied collection of poetry and prose, hopeful and depressing, for there to be enough to satisfy.

In contrast to the bulk of white male dominated writing "As Good As We Make It" contains much work by black and women writers. The subject matter is varied. There's stories about the classroom clown, coming to London, the police, prison and psychiatrists. Throughout the writing reflects the experience of women, the black community, the unemployed and young people in general - being misunderstood by older people who can't be bothered to find the time to see beyond their first impressions etc.

Sometimes this makes for depressing reading. True the subject matter often reflects the worst features of life, but then life for so many of the young in Hackney is dominated by such issues as unemployment etc. Just to prove that more hopeful writing is included how about a poem by Monica Chaplin that gives the book its title:

From now on  
I'm going to look to the future  
And believe in my dreams  
In my courage and faith never  
failing  
By setting out with a song in  
my heart  
I'll find a goal prevailing

I will hold on to faith  
Whatever fate sends  
Rough weather or fine I will  
take it  
And I will how with love in  
sight  
That life is as good as we  
make it.

## FAIR

Hackney CND is stepping up its campaign by staging another Peace Fair on Saturday 11 December at Hackney Baths in Lower Clapton Road.

The Fair will feature an exhibition on nuclear weapons and the effects of their use as well as competitions, a raffle and stalls.

Last year's Peace Fair was a tremendous success which brought over 1,000 Hackney people together under the banner of Life and Peace. See you again at this year's Fair!

## HEALTH DISPUTE

It looks like it is going to be a long, cold winter for the hospital workers. It is nearly eight months since the health service pay dispute began, and the Government has still refused to make any major concessions on the unions' demand for a 12% wage rise.

The most recent Day of Action to back the health workers took place on 14 October, but response to this fell far short of the successful turnout of the 22 September. Part of the blame must rest with the TUC which evidently failed to drum up enough support both inside and outside the hospitals. It is also alleged that the white collar unions in the health service during the dispute were less than solid in their commitment.

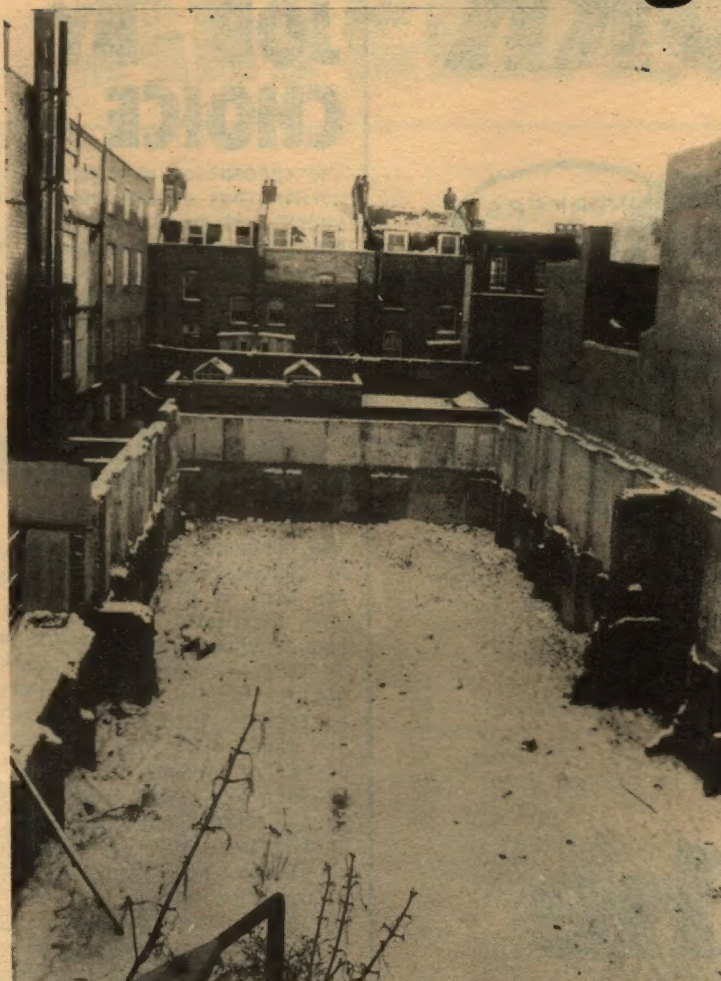
The only hospitals in the Hackney area which responded to the strike call on 14 October were the Hackney and Bethnal Green. Others such as the Queen Elisabeth Hospital for Children were apparently working normally. Stan Richards, branch secretary of the National Union of Public Employees at the Queen Elisabeth, admitted that some of the blame for this lack of response should be laid at the feet of the TUC. He also added that his members were despondent about the apparent lack of commitment of the white collar unions of ASTMS and NALGO in the hospital.

Meanwhile, a further Day of Action is planned for Monday 8 November. As with the other days of action, its success depends largely on the support of workers outside the health service. The importance of this support becomes more obvious as the Government continues to ignore the health workers' demands. The Government also knows that an all-out strike by the hospitals would hurt the most vulnerable and least powerful people in society. As Stan Richards pointed out: 'It is the working class people who will suffer, whereas people in the well-off bracket would book straight away into a private hospital.'

He pointed out that these unions would benefit as much as his own if the Government were forced to offer a 12% pay rise, and added: 'We're fighting for this claim as well. We're losing a day's pay - and they're contributing nothing.'

If the Tories win the next general election, the chances are there will be precious little left to defend in the Health service.

pic: Freeform.



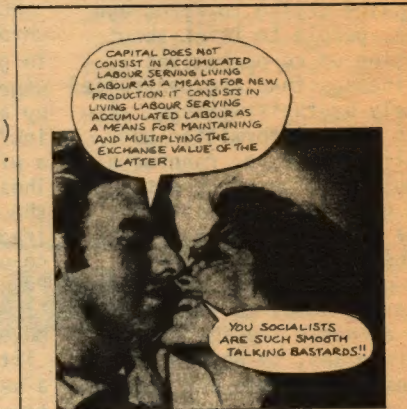
'The Pit'-- Soon to become a leafy Community Garden.

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## Ray Lowry posters



Duotones (green & red)  
on high quality paper.  
320mm x 450mm



RL2



RL3



RL4



RL5 Available from:

Trojan Posters, A Workers' Co-operative, 47a Grayling Road, London N16. 01-809 2889

60 pence each plus VAT.  
Postage and Packing, 60 pence  
per order. Please allow  
21 days for delivery.



# WHAT'S ON

## Theatre

### HALF MOON

213 Mile End Road, E1. 790 4000.  
November/December  
Yakety Yak! Fifties rock n roll musical set in the streets of New York. Based on the music of Leiber and Stoller. 8pm. Mon-Thurs £3. (Students and OAPs £2). Fri-Sat all tickets £4. Unemployed free, subject to availability of seats.

From 27 December: Wizard of Oz.

### THEATRE ROYAL

Gerry Raffles Square, E.15. 534 0301.  
17-21 November Five variety nights hosted by Kate Williams. 8pm. £1-£5 (£1 OAPs, students and claimants).  
1 December Jack and the Beanstalk. 2.15pm and 7.30pm. £2-£4 (half price for OAPs, students, claimants.)

### INNER CITY THEATRE CO

Upton Community Centre, 12 Upton Road, N.1. 249 1711.  
\*The Legend of Hannah Snell  
An East End character who, wronged by her husband, travelled to India to find him disguised as a cabin boy. She fought in battles and gained a reputation for bravery, ending up as the landlady of the Female Warrior in Wapping.  
Fri 12 November Hoxton Hall (contact for details)  
Wed 17 November Half Moon Theatre. 2 pm.

### Other current shows:

\*Big Game A modern safari for kids of all ages to the ruined city of Wangaduli in search of the legendary Dongo, a beast much prized for its fur.  
\*Let the Good Times Roll  
The adults Christmas show, based in Hackney in the 50s, with the emphasis on music.

The Inner City Theatre is a professional company creating productions based on material from the local community. It also runs workshops on drama and related skills. A touring company, its shows can be booked by local groups such as tenants associations and youth groups for their own halls. Prices range from £25-£50.

LITTLE ANGEL MARIONETTE THEATRE  
14 Dagmar Passage, Cross St, N.1. 226 1782.  
Saturdays and Sundays until 28 November: Hans the Bellringer. 3pm. Adults £2, children £1.25.  
From 4 December Angelo.

## Cinema

### ACE

13-15 Stoke Newington Rd N16 254 2415  
(formerly the Konak)

From 7 Nov- Best little whorehouse in Texas

Phone the cinema for programme times, and films end Nov. All seats £2 adults, £1 children, UB40s, 50p for OAPs.

### ASTRA

119 Stoke Newington Road. N16 254 0046

### RIO

107 Kingsland High Street, E8 249 2722

Sun 14 Nov: I married a monster from outer space (X) 3.00; Monster on campus (A) 4.30; Colossus of New York (A) 6.00  
Sun 14-Wed 17 My brilliant career (U) 7.15; Heatwave (AA) 5.30 & 9.10  
Thurs 18-Sat 27 The enemy (dir: Guney) 4.15 (sat), 6.30, 8.45  
Sun 21 Kings of the road (X) (dir Wenders) 3.00  
Sun 28 Diary of a chambermaid (AA) 2.30, The phantom of liberty(X)(dir Bunuel) 4.15

## Music

### CROWN & CASTLE

600 Kingsland Road, E8 254 3678

Downstairs bar Live folk music most nights - free  
Upstairs bar Doors open at 9pm, show starts at 10pm. Late bar and food. Cabaret - phone for details.

### FOX'S WINE BAR

Stoke Newington Church St N16 254 2709

Free at 8.30  
Fri 19 Nov Phil Mead (piano) and Andy Herbet (bass)  
Sat 20 Nov David Hurst & Paul Heard (bass)  
Fri 26 Nov Louis O'Neill (rock 'n boogie)  
Sat 27 Nov Simon Purcell (Piano) and Nick Hutton (bass)  
Fri 3 Dec Red Sergt (guitar) and Malcolm Gillespie (bass)  
Sat 4 Dec Alisdair Gavin (piano) and Tim Sanders (sax)  
Fri 10 Dec ""  
Sat 11 Dec Lyn Dobson (sax) and Chris Goldman (piano)

HALF MOON THEATRE  
See under Theatre.

Sun 5 Dec The Fantoms (rock 'n roll) 8.00 £1.50  
Sun 12 Dec Chevrolet (rock 'n roll) 8.00 £1.50

### THE PEGASUS

109 Green Lanes, N16 254 5930

Mondays The Breakers £1  
Tuesdays The Harfoot Brothers £1

Wednesdays Crannog £1  
Thursday 11 Micky Jupp £1.50  
Thursday 18 Ivory coasters £1.50  
Thursday 25 Hank Wangford £2  
Friday 12/26 Juice on the loose £1.50  
Friday 19 Kokomo £2  
Saturdays Big chief £1.50  
Saturday 27 Special gig for School for deaf children £2, 8.30  
Sundays The Republic £1.30

Reductions for students, the unemployed, claimants and nurses.

### HACKNEY MUSICIANS' COLLECTIVE

Live gigs every Thursday at the Sir George Robey pub, Finsbury Park (opposite the Rainbow) Free or 50p 9.00-11.00

Thursday 11 The Vents and the Fleas  
Thursday 18 Park Down jets and support  
Thursday 26 Dave Ellis band

Meetings for musicians held first Wednesday each month at Centerprise, Kingsland Rd, N16. 7.30

### PEMBURY ARMS

90 Amhurst Road, E8 985 5288

Mons & Tues Video films  
Weds Country & Western DJ  
Thurs DJ (free)  
Fris Rock 'n roll DJ  
Saturdays DJ plus bar snacks  
Sundays Flying saucers (50p) Starts 8.30

## chats palace

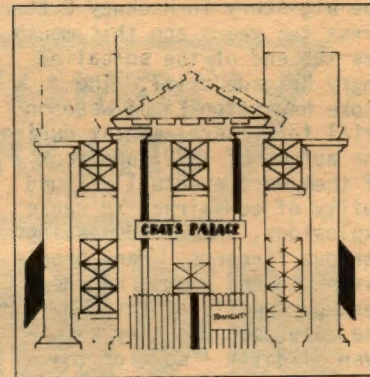
### CHATS PALACE

42-44 Brooksby's Walk, E9. 986 6714. Bookings 533 0227.

Sat  
NOVEMBER  
Sat 13 Burgerbar Galactica benefit night with Keith Allen, Controlled Attack, Chats Arkestra plus late night film. 8pm. £2.50/£1.50.  
Sun 14. Lunchtime jazz. John Bennett Big Band. 12 noon. £1.  
Wed 17. Chats Palace AGM. All members welcome. 8pm.  
Thurs 18 Disco Dance in aid of Morningside Youth Football Club. £2. 8pm.  
Fri 19 Accidental Death of a Cabaret with Contolled Attack plus guests. 8pm. £2/£1.  
Sat 20 Trickster Theatre Co in Times of Lies. 8pm. £2/£1.  
Sun 21 Lunchtime jazz. Ruthie Smith, Julia Doyle and Greg DCarmichael. 12 noon. Free.  
Wed 24. Juggling with Eric and Sue in the bar. Free.  
Thurs 25. Entertainment with comedian Andy Cunningham in the bar. Free.  
Fri 26 Boogie with Geraint Watkins in the bar. Free.  
Sat 27 Rhythm n Blues Burgerbar Galactica benefit night with Diz and the Doormen and Louis and the Boogiemen. 8pm. £2.50/£1.50.  
Sun 28 Lunchtime jazz. Jazz Sviners. Free. 12 noon.

### DECEMBER

Wednesdays to Saturday nights and Sunday lunchtimes: entertainment in the bar until Tues 14: Opening Night of Christmas Show Burgerbar Galactica (see separate article).



### CHATS PALACE CHRISTMAS SHOW: BURGERBAR GALACTICA.

From Tuesday December 14 Chats Palace will be presenting its sixth spectacular Christmas Show, Burgerbar Galactica. Working from themes and ideas provided by a workshop run at Chats the script has been written by Alan Gilbey and Lesley Mildner of Controlled Attack. The show is directed by John Perry, choreographed by Rosina Bonsu, music composed and arranged by Gerry Hunt and John Barker with the help of the Chats Arkestra. With music, drama and workshops already rehearsing the show, set construction beginning this month and costumes and special effects underway, the Palace is under going its seasonal transformation. Anyone interested in helping in any way should contact Chats Palace on 986 6714.

The show opens on Tuesday December 14 and runs Tues to Sat until January 16, excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. There will be extra performances on Mon Dec 20 and 27 as well as matinees each Sat at 2.30pm excluding New Years Day, when there will be only the evening performance. The Box Office will be open from 5 to 7pm Tues to Sat throughout November and from 4 to 7pm Tues to Sat throughout Dec and until Jan 16. Tel 533 0227.

## Meetings

Those of you addicted to Annual General Meetings might like to make a note of the following:  
Wed 17 Nov - CHATS PALACE 8pm, all members welcome.  
28 Nov - INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS 3.30pm.  
They are hoping to set up a community centre in Stamford Hill: suggestions to ICR, 101 Dunsmure Rd., N16.  
29 Nov- The LAW CENTRE at 236 Mare St. at 7.30. The leader of the Council will be speaking on the Council's plans to decentralise services and the effects this will have on the people of Hackney. Tel 986 8446 for more information.

### Nuclear power and nuclear weapons Public meeting

15 Nov, 7.30 Islington Central Library, Fieldway Crescent, N7. Film, slides and speakers. Arranged by Islington and Hackney Friends of the Earth

## Other events

Art exhibition by pupils of Skinners' Company's school, Chalmers' Art Gallery, Edwards Lane, Stoke Newington Church St Tuesday-Saturday 16-27 Nov Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5

Lenny Henry show 18 Nov 7.30 Assembly Hall, Stoke Newington Church St

Mozart & Mendelssohn concert 23 Nov, 8.00 Town hall

Charlie is me darlin' Show on Charlie Chaplin, 30 Nov 7.30 Town hall

### DALSTON CHILDREN'S CENTRE

112 Greenwood Road, E8 254 9661  
10.00-2.00 Monday -Wed & Friday

### 17-31 Nov People in Hackney

Dance for 7-12 year olds at the Ferncliff Centre, Ferncliff Road, E8. 10.30 am on Saturdays

Pocketfull of tricks Theatre of Thelema, Ferncliff Centre, 2pm 26 Nov. For 3-7 year olds.

Building an Irish solidarity movement 1 day conference, North London Irish Solidarity committee, 20 nov, 9.15-5.30 Caxton House, St John's Way Archway, N19. Accommodation creche and food. £2, for the unwaged £1.

Horizon dance group Indian dance lessons, music and painting for 4-12 year olds. Free. Contact Mrs A Dam 254 7809

### Law Centre

AGM, 29 Nov 7.30 at 236 Mare Street. Council leader will give talk on decentralisation

### HCA open meeting

15 Nov 8.00  
On the agenda, Welfare Rights Unit  
Stoke Newington Community Centre (fire station), Leswin Road, Brooke Rd N16

### Four Corners

113 Roman Road, E2 981 4243

Transport images: film sessions at 7.30  
Fri 19 Nov Working the network (Shunter Black's night off, Busman's holiday, Women repair buses, Gaps in the service)  
Fri 26 Nov Settled and resettled (Living with strangers, Challenge war on the slums, Traffic in towns, Experiment in towns)  
Fri 3 Dec Planners and the public (North London line, recent material on London's transport crisis)  
Entrance £1, unwaged 50p

Circles: women only screening Admission £1.50. Phone 981 6828 for details of December screenings.



LESNEYS STRIPPED

(continued from page 1)  
As they are a Hong Kong based company it would make sense for them to send materials and so on there. Despite all their fine words about 'establishing manufacturing operations' in the UK it is clear that 'market forces' or some other convenient excuse may just be used to close down all the UK operations once they have moved everything useful out of the country.

The position of the 850 workers left at the Hackney factory next to the Eastway is now unclear. Redundancy notices have been issued dismissing them all on 10 January next year but in effect they will all go on 24 December. To see if anything can be salvaged from the mess left by Lesneys, a working group of union members, the GLC and Hackney Council has been set up. This includes representatives from the shop stewards at the factory as well as full-time union officials, members of the Trades Council, councillors and council officers. The meeting was convened by the Trade Union Support Unit. It was agreed that a consultant production engineer would be taken on who would produce a very quick assessment of whether any alternative products could be made at the factories or any other possibilities. He is working closely with shop stewards from the plant - but even if they are able to come up with any ideas it will be difficult to get anything done in time.

1982

## Hackney: 10 years ago 1972

The big story in Hackney Gutter Press ten years ago this month was the end of the so-called Angry Brigade trial. The Stoke Newington Eight were on trial for several months during the autumn of 1972, and four of them were eventually found guilty of conspiracy to cause explosions, and of possessing various firearms. Many people living in and around Hackney were personally affected by the case, because they knew - even slightly - some of the defendants. The Hackney Gutter Press's conclusions were prophetic about how political life would develop in Britain in the future.

"You may reject the Angry Brigade and their methods. But the fact is that many legal forms of political action have been dragged through the mud in this trial. Those in the dock were involved in squatting, claimants unions, women's liberation and the Gay Liberation Front, and all these groups could suffer from the verdicts..."

The threat to civil rights and the freedom of political dissent has become obvious in this trial. The judge indicated in his final speech that he thought the accused had put these rights in jeopardy. But equally guilty of this were the police who



From Hackney Gutter Press December 1972.

rode roughshod over their own regulations to get people.

It ought to be possible to be effective politically in this country without having to resort to violence. But if it isn't - if people involved in quite legal political activity and propaganda are at risk - then this will scare off the timid, and make the brave more extreme. Either way, it's a disaster...

How near are we to jailing people who use political means for political ends?"



INSIDE LEFT

# FACING DEFOE

"Step forward," as the Sunday Express used to say, "Councillor Gery (how he spells it) Lawless." Gery who? you may be asking. You mean that you don't know about the North Defoe ward by-election? The answer is, you probably don't know, and you may not even care. But there's going to be yet another burst of baby-kissing, door-knocking, promises of peace on earth and improvement of the services in Stoke Newington Church Street as the opposing forces line up. There even promises to be a side-issue in a split in the multi-coloured hairstyle vote as punk Communist artist Peg Blatchford takes on an unknown punk Liberal. (That's right, you didn't misread that last sentence.)

All this is somewhat immaterial since North Defoe is one of the safest in the borough, and so we'll be seeing Councillor Gery in his seat very soon. Political commentators would, if they were at all thick on the ground in Hackney, be labelling the by-election as the first test of the Council's new policies. What do the people think of the new style of leadership? The Council has probably never had a marathon running polytechnic lecturer in community studies as its leader before. It has also probably never had a leader who was, on the one hand, so publicly identified with greater democracy through the decentralisation programme and, on the other hand, adopted what he himself described as the Michael Edwardes approach to industrial relations in bringing the dispute in the housing department to an end. But do the public know? Do they care?

The Council seems to be

standing up quite well to the changeover since last May. There are rumours of discontent in the social services department - with further evidence of Edwardes style industrial relations there. However, middle management inside the Council is quite enthusiastic about the decentralisation policies, and there was no shortage of volunteers to go to the ward meetings. But the real test will come in persuading the manual workers to go along with the policies.

## INSPIRED

The Kendall-Kahn leadership (and it was a politically inspired move on someone's part to bring the two together as leader and deputy leader) would seem to have a secure base inside the Council for the remainder of their term of office. There is opposition outside, of course, and that has been coming from a number of rather strange sources. One constant letter-writer to the Gazette has been Patrick Harris, once the Council's very own Community Development Officer. He now sits at home writing warning parables about "the Raj", as he quaintly calls the style of leadership. He is presumably referring to the Kendall family's background in the Colonial Service, but the point is probably lost on all but a few readers.

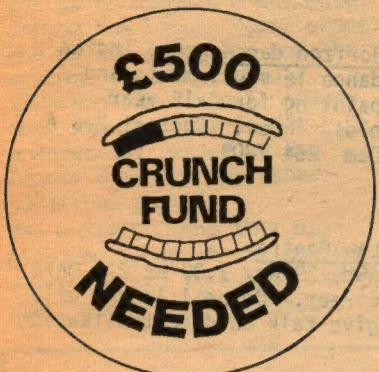
Another writer to the Gazette letter page (increasingly becoming the resting place of the old, the bigoted and the nutty) has been man-in-black and ex-Councillor twice-over Ron Heister. His latest outburst appears to be a criticism of the Council for spending money in creating jobs for "ex-members of the National Union of Students" and a warning to the people to prepare for a large rate increase. Heisterologists will know that this may, in fact be some thinly-disguised code - or some other part of a plot that would outfox Smiley himself in its complexity.

Much as Ron would like to be, he is not, however, a candidate in North Defoe and so the Council is spared his conspiracy theories from within. The slogan that Labour has chosen for North Defoe is VOTE AGAIN: Show you care. Given the apathy that is likely to pervade the campaign, perhaps it should be VOTE AGAIN: Show you notice.

## ACCOUNTING

The Community Accountancy Project recently set up in Hackney has had its funding increased. As reported in last month's HPP the initial funding was for one worker for one year - this has now been extended for an extra year.

Hackney Community Action are continuing to press for two workers for at least three years. For more details of the service ring Andreas on 249 7109.



TOTAL SO FAR £76

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You will have noticed that this issue of HPP is late appearing. It is also a double issue, covering both November and December. This has been caused by our financial crisis - which we have by no means yet solved.

We have succeeded in blacking out just three of the teeth in the drawing: just £76 raised out of the £500 that we MUST have to keep the paper going. We know that lots of our friends are saying that they will give us money. What we say now is, DON'T DELAY - send your donation in now, because there simply won't be an HPP in the new year if this money is not raised.

To make things easy for you, we have put two tear-off slips at the bottom of

this page. One is a simple donation form. The other is an easy way for you to make a regular donation to HPP by making out a banker's order. All you have to do is to fill it in, send it to us and we send it on to the bank who do the rest. You don't have to worry and you can sleep easily at nights in the full knowledge that you've done your bit to keep HPP alive. And there's an added bonus. If you take out a Special Supporting Subscription of £10 per year - or £1 per month - we will not only send you a subscription copy of HPP every month, but you will get FREE ENTRY to a any benefits or other events organised by HPP during the year! What a bargain. Can you afford to miss it?

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